

111th Fighter Wing

Pennsylvania Air National Guard

Willow Grove Air Reserve Station



Mission: The mission of the 111th Fighter Wing (FW) is to provide and maintain operationally ready, highly trained, well-equipped military personnel who provide combat-ready A-10 aircraft and support elements in response to wartime and peacetime tasking under federal or state authority.

The 111th Fighter Wing is indispensable in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). It is prepared to support Air Force war contingency requirements and can support the Homeland Defense and Homeland Security missions as well as a variety of peacetime missions as required. The 103rd Fighter Squadron is the operational combat arm of the 111th. Their primary mission is to provide combat-ready forces able to conduct day and night Close Air Support (CAS) for our joint and coalition ground forces. Other roles include, Airborne Forward Air Control (AFAC), Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), and Air Interdiction (AI).



Assigned Aircraft: The 111th FW flies the A-10 Thunderbolt II, affectionately known as the Warthog. Fifteen A-10s are currently assigned to the 111th FW.

Gaining Command: Air Combat Command.

Unit Location: The 111th FW is based at the Willow Grove Air Reserve Station, Willow Grove (Horsham Township), Pennsylvania. It moved to its current location in March 1963. With its proximity to Philadelphia and major Northeast United States population centers, Willow Grove offers an ideal location for the 111th to recruit and retain a highly diverse group of men and women whose service is essential to mission accomplishment. The 111th estimates that 90% of its personnel travel fewer than 50 miles to serve in the unit.

Strength: Over 1,000 Air National Guard personnel proudly serve in the 111th Fighter Wing. Unit strength is currently 98.3% as shown in the table:

	Authorized	Assigned
National Guard Technicians	205	200
Active Guard Reserve	70	69
Total Full-Time Force	275	267
Traditional Guard Members	744	734
Total Full-Time and Part-Time	1019	1001

Combat Experience: The aircrews, maintenance, and other personnel of the 111th are some of the Air Force's most experienced combat-ready forces. They offer three times the experience at one-third the cost of an active duty unit. Since September 11, 2001, A-10 aircraft and personnel from the 111th Fighter Wing have deployed to Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan and numerous other locations around the globe. Over 75% of the wing's personnel have deployed overseas since 9/11/2001. The wing has deployed to Southwest Asia 5 times in the last 10 years.

Economic Impact: The 111th FW has an annual economic impact of \$57 million, with most of the benefits being concentrated in the Willow Grove/Horsham Township communities. The 111th FW is a major contributor to the positive economic benefits generated by the military presence at Willow Grove.

DOD BRAC Recommendation: The Department of Defense has recommended that the 111th Fighter Wing be deactivated as part of the proposal to realign Willow Grove. The Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs believes this recommendation to be fundamentally flawed in that:

- The DOD BRAC recommendation failed to adequately assess the combat readiness and military value of the 111th FW. Willow Grove consists of two separate entities, Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base and the Air Reserve Station. The true military value of the 111th is potentially masked, as it appears the data has been incorrectly evaluated. The potential to expand joint opportunities is lost with the current recommendation to cease flying operations and turn the base into an "enclave" of undefined size for predominate use by the Army Reserve.
- The DOD BRAC recommendation failed to consider alternatives for maintaining flying operations at Willow Grove, to include operation of the airport by the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserve or the local community. The airfield is a vital strategic asset in support of the GWOT and Homeland Defense.
- The Department of Defense did not consider how the 111th FW and Pennsylvania's 28th Infantry Division and its new Stryker Brigade have and will conduct joint air and ground operations and operational training. With the Stryker Brigade headquarters located in close proximity to Willow Grove, the ability to station, train, and deploy this unique capability already exists.
- The Department of Defense did not consult with the Governor of Pennsylvania or the Adjutant General in recommending deactivation of this important flying unit.

History: The 111th Fighter Wing history began with the establishment of the 103rd Observation Squadron in June 1924. The 103rd was founded and eventually commanded by Major Biddle, who had flown in WWI as part of the famous Lafayette Escadrilles (a volunteer group of American pilots flying French aircraft before our country's entry into WWI).

Published by the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. For more information about the 111th Fighter Wing, go to www.dmva.state.pa.us and www.pawill.ang.mil.

This new National Guard squadron was based on the sod fields of Philadelphia Airport as a unit in the 28th Division, Pennsylvania Army National Guard. The 103rd has operated continuously since its federal recognition in 1924. Today it is known as the 103rd Fighter Squadron, which is the flying element of the 111th Fighter Wing.